DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 172 129 CG 013 572

AUTHOR Miller, Mark J.
TITLE Pupil Pleasure Poll: An Approach to Increasing Student Retention.
PUB DATE 20 Mar 79
NOTE 15p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Admission; *College Students; *Declining Enrollment; Educational Environment; Higher Education; *School Holding Power; *Student Attitudes; *Student College Relationship; Student Personnel Services

ABSTRACT

Colleges and universities can expect a decrease in the number of incoming freshmen. However, increased retention can compensate somewhat for the predictable decrease in enrollment. As a result, it becomes important to measure student satisfaction with the student's chosen college. This article, therefore, presents a "Pupil Pleasure Poll" to be used by the college administrator in assessing current student needs and perceptions of its student body. The development of relevant programs can be one outgrowth of this survey. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED172129

PUPIL PLEASURE POLL: AN APPROACH TO INCREASING STUDENT RETENTION

Mark J. Miller, Ph.D.
Director of Counseling
Clarke College
1550 Clarke Drive
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

March 20, 1979

CG013572

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mark J. Miller

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PUPIL PLEASURE POLL: An Approach to Increasing Student Retention.

The period of automatic and unparalleled growth in American higher education appears to be recorded history. In the foreseeable future, colleges and universities can expect a decrease in the number of potential enrollees as the number of high school students continue to decline (Noel, 1978). The basic trend that goes unquestioned is that the number of 18-year-old Americans is going to drop approximately 20 per cent during the 1980's (Maganell, 1978a). Furthermore, a preliminary report from the National Center for Education Statistics on the combined finances of U.S. universities and colleges, indicates that the institutions collected 9.5 per cent more tuition and fees from 1.5 per cent fewer students than in the previous year (Maganell, 1978b).

Declining high school enrollments and the ever changing nature of the traditional student pool for college entrance suggests the desirability of colleges and universities to better comprehend the characteristics of their student body (Huddleston and Wiehe, 1978). Not only are dramatic changes taking place in enrollments in higher education, but the recent proliferation of studies on attrition indicates an increasing interest in the college dropout and thus factors that contribute to attrition (Dalton etal, 1977).

In view of the projections for the remainder of this century of decreasing numbers of matriculating students, there has been increased interest in the study of student retention (Steele, 1978). More recent literature has addressed itself to the concerns related to retention and attrition (Astin, 1975; Haagen, 1977; Tinto. 1975; Hahn, 1974; Noel, 1976; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1977; Pervin etal, 1966; and Summerskill, 1972). Since increased retention can partially compensate for the predictable decrease in enrollment, it becomes paramount to measure students relative satisfaction with the chosen college in hopes of retaining students. Childlike logic suggests that the greater the student's satisfaction towards the college, the greater the probability of that student remaining in college. As a result, there appears a need for the development of an efficient and effective instrument geared towards measuring total student satisfaction.

This article, therefore, is an effort to measure student satisfaction via a survey instrument currently being used at a private midwestern liberal arts college for the same purpose. Implications for college administrators are also examined.

PUPIL PLEASURE POLL

____ Freshman

____ Sophomore

____ Junior

____ Senior

____ Residence Hall (which one)_____

_____

____ Commuter

Major field of study_____

_____

Check as many boxes as apply:

1. What were your initial reasons for coming to _____?

____ College for men/women

Geographical Location

_____ close to home

_____ far from home

_____ median distance from home

____ School Size

____ Field of Study

____ Academic Reputation

____ Church-Affiliated (if applicable)

____ Relative Previously Attended

____ Other (specify)_____

_____

2. How did you first learn about _____?

____ Friends

____ Former students

____ Teachers/Counselors

____ Parents/Relatives

____ College Recruiters

2. How did you first learn about _____?

____Viewbook, brochures

____Present student

____Other means (specify)_____

_____

3. As far as you know, what are your immediate plans after graduation?

____ Attend graduate school

____ Seek job related to college major

____ Seek employment, not necessarily related to major

____ Get married

____ Undecided

Other (specify)_____

_____

4. Rate the following departments by its curriculum and its faculty. Leave blank those which you have no exposure.

Scale
1. Poor
2. Fair
3. Good
4. Excellent

Rate Curriculum on:
Courses meet my needs, interesting, relevant, well organized.

Rate Faculty on:
Approachability, enthusiasm, fairness, ability to communicate, knowledge of subject matter.

Curriculum		Faculty
	Art	
	Drama/Speech	
	Biology	
	Allied Health Programs	
	Chemistry	
	Computer and Management Sciences	
	Accounting and Economics	
	Edcation:	
	Secondary	
	Elementary	
	Special Education	
	English	
	Food/Nutrition	
	French	
	History	
	Political Science	
	Journalism Communcation	
	Mathematics	
	Music	
	Philosophy	
	Psychology	
	Religious Studies	
	Sociolcgy/Social Work	
	Spanish	

5. Often, the "behavior" of the administrative personnel contributes to your overall satisfaction about a school. Based on your experience at _____, how would you rate the following?

Scale

1. Ver cold, distant; afraid to approach.
2. Very moody, never know what to expect.
3. Generally very friendly, makes me feel positive.
4. Effective, advocate of my needs.
5. Never met the individual.

5. (cont'd)

____	President	____	Director of Counseling
____	Academic Dean	____	Director of Student Activites
____	Dean of Students	____	Director of Food Service
____	Director of Student Accounts	____	Director of Financial Aid
____	Registrar	____	Resident Hall Directors
____	Post Office Manager	____	Resident Hall Staff
____	Director of Public Relations	____	Coordinator of Campus Ministry
____	Librarians	____	Director of Career Planning
____	Bookstore Manager	____	OCS Director

6. What are the determining factors that keep you at_____?

(for upperclassmen only)

____ The curriculum.

____ Friends you met while at _____.

____ Caliber of faculty members.

____ Concern and understanding of administration

____ Personal feeling that you are more than just another student

____ Parents want me here.

____ Pressure from_____.

____ I don't know what else to do.

6. What are the determining factor that keep you at_____?

____ Proximity from home.

____ Philosophy of school (academic/spiritual).

____ Resident assistants.

____ Other reasons (specify)_____

_____

7. If you were to leave _____, what would most possibly be your reason?

____ Dissatisfied with homogenity of student body (all men or all women)

____ Curriculum did not meet my needs.

____ Boredom caused by uninspired teachers.

____ Course material too difficult.

"Overprotective feeling I got from the:

____ Faculty Advisors

____ Administrators

____ Resident Assistants.

____ My classmates.

____ Too expensive.

____ Lack of privacy(school is so small everyone knows what you are doing).

____ Homesick.

____ Lack of social activities.

____ Dissatisfied with dorm living, specifically with:

____ Roommate
____ Entire wing
____ Resident assistants

7. (cont'd)

____Other reasons (specify)_____

_____

8. How are you satisfied with each of the following?

1. Not satisfied.
2. Fairly satisfied.
3. Very satisfied.

____ City of _____.

____ Cafeteria food.

____ Academic facilities.

____ Resident hall experience.

____ Number of school-related organizations.

____ Non-academic social experience.

9. Which school year would you say is the most critical in determining whether a student stays at _____ or moves elsewhere?

____ Freshman

____ Sophomore

____ Junior

____ Senior

Explain (optional)_____

_____

10. You have just been given the power, authority and money to change and/or add three things to _____. Your sole objective is to increase enrollment and decrease the drop-out rate. What three changes would you make?

1.

2.

3.

Please complete and return to:

IMPLICATIONS FOR COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

The information gathered from the "Pupil Pleasure Poll" should help the respective college or university to understand the particular characteristics of the student body, on whom so much of its financial base rests. The survey identifies what students feel desirable and undesirable about the institution to which they have chosen to attend (Huddleston, 1976). Data gathered from it can be used to implement constructive changes and initiate programs based upon the students' needs.

A survey such as this one, can express to the student body that the faculty and administration are concerned about their well-being. Without an active approach, appropriate administrators could not know the students' perceptions of their college experience, and therefore, could not deliver the services the students require. If colleges and universities are going to retain a significantly greater number of students--say the 25 per cent whom they have a chance of retaining--they will have to be: (a) more demonstrative in showing their interest in and expressing their affirmation of the students; (b) more assertive and intentional in carrying their programs and services to them, particularly the first years of their college life (De Jong, 1978). For example, if it is discovered that most students feel the sophomore year is indeed the most critical in determining whether a student stays in college or leaves;

the counselor could conduct a "For Sophomores Only" workshop concentrating on the expressed needs common to that particular age group.

In order for colleges and universities to establish themselves as competent and concerned institutions, they must begin to establish a firm foundation upon which to justify their existence. This foundation must be based on meeting the needs of its students. In order to meet the needs of the students, colleges and universities must give focus to specific activities. If indeed, the activities addressed be current student needs, effectiveness will be more likely. It is hoped that the "Pupil Pleasure Poll" will be used as a potent technique in assessing current student needs and developing programs which will ultimately satisfy these needs, thus resulting in student retention.

REFERENCES

[1]Astin, A.W. Preventing Students from Dropping Out. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1975.

[2]Dalton, S., Anastasiow, M., and Brigman, S.L. The Relationship of Under Achievement and College Attrition. Journal of College Student Personnel, 1977, 18, 501-505.

[3]De Jong, A.J. The Challenge of Retention. Paper presented at 23rd National Institute for the Advancement of Small Colleges, 1978, June 11-15, Iowa.

[4]Haagen, C.H. Venturing Beyond the Campus: Students Who Leave College. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1977.

[5]Hahn, R.W. In Defense of Dropping Out: A Forthright Refutation of Community College Dogma. Community College Review, 1974, 1(4), 35-40.

[6]Huddleston, T., Jr., and Wiebe, F.A. Understanding the Nature of the Student Market for a Private University. Journal of College Student Personnel, 1978, 19 (6), 517-523.

[7]Huddleston, T., Jr. Marketing: The Applicant Questionnaire. College and University, 1976, 52, 214-219.

[8]Magarrell, G. College Enrollment Dropped, Tuition Income Rose Last Year. The Chronicle of Higher Education, 1978, 16 (10), 9.

[9]Magarrell, J. The Enrollment Roller Coaster: Colleges Fear the Big Dip. The Chronicle of Higher Education, 1978, 17 (1), 1; 12-13.

[10]Noel, L. College Student Retention--A Campus Wide Responsibility. Recruitment and Retention. Paper presented at 23rd National Institute. Sponsored by: Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges, 1978, June 11-15, Iowa.

REFERENCES
(cont'd)

[11]Noel, L. College Student Retention--A Campus-Wide Responsibility. National ACAC Journal, 1976, 21, 33-36.

[12]Pascarella, E.T., and Terenzini, P.T. Patterns of Student-Faculty Informal Interaction Beyond the Classroom and Voluntary Freshman Attrition. Journal of Higher Education, 1977, 40, 540-552.

[13]Pervin, L.A., Reik, L.E., and Dalrymple, W (Eds) The College Dropout and the Utilization of Talent. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966.

[14]Steele, M.N. Correlates of Undergraduate Retention at the University of Miami. Journal of College Student Personnel, 1978, 19, 349-352.

[15]Summerskill, J. Dropouts from College. The American College: A Psychological and Social Interpretation of the Higher Learning, edited by N. Sanford. New York: Wiley, 1972.

[16]Tinto, V. Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research. Review of Educational Research, 1975, 45, 89-125.